Christianity and Industry: Ten

WHY NOT TRY CHRISTIANITY?

BY

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FAIL

"The condition of the World is an ultimatum to Christianity"—Sir Edward Grey

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WHY NOT TRY CHRISTIANITY?

THE QUESTION

The present is one of the fateful hours in the world's history. One age is passing and a new age is struggling to be born. Old leases are running out and new ones are demanded. There has probably never been an hour when so many questions were coming up for a hearing. The sign manual of today is an interrogation point rampant. What we call our horizon is a line of question marks. These questions sweep the circle and deal with all aspects of life. The Sphinx is sitting by the roadside in our Western world and is propounding her fateful riddles to the people.

But perhaps the most searching and insistent questions of all, relate to religion. These have to do, not with forms of organization and statements of doctrine, for men have little interest in such matters. These questions have to do rather with the very reality and essential value of Christianity itself. Is Christianity the perfect and final religion? Is the Gospel the power of God unto the salvation both of men and of society? Do the teachings of Christ apply to all life and will they work in the present order? But even more insistent questions are being asked. If Christ has come to save the world and establish the Kingdom of God, why has the Gospel no larger results to show? Does not the condition of the world prove that the churches have been unfaithful to their trust, or that the Gospel they profess is weak and incapable of meeting the larger needs of the world? What right have the churches, in view of the world situation, to claim the Christian name? The churches stand arraigned at the bar of public opinion, and it is perfectly fatuous for churchmen to resent these questions or to avoid the issue.

For nineteen hundred years the Gospel has been known and its power confessed. Yet questions concerning its vitality and value have never been so insistent as now. What lies behind the questioning of our day and gives such urgency to these questions? Some one asked Phillips Brooks if he did not think that Christianity had failed; and the great preacher replied: "Why bless you, man, it has never been tried." Accepting this judgment, we yet ask, why has it not been tried? Perhaps the comment of Chesterton may suggest the answer: "Christianity has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and not tried." But this only throws the inquiry a little farther back. For is not the Gospel supposed to create that state of mind in men which will lead them to follow their Master whithersoever he goeth? This brings us to the severe statement of Graham Wallas: "If a religion which has existed for two thousand years and has been held officially by most powerful nations in the world for fifteen hundred years has not been tried, it has failed."

All this raises some questions which the churches must face. Why has Christianity not been tried? What might it do today if it were really tried? Will the men who profess to be Christ's disciples find out what the Gospel means and go the whole length in proving the Gospel's power? There are those who say that Christianity faces the greatest crisis and supremest challenge of its long history. At any rate these questions carry us into the very heart of the situation.

THE LESSON OF HISTORY

The Gospel arose in one of the darkest hours of the world's history, when it had everything against it. It came to men who were sunk in sin and hopelessness and brought a message of life and light; and everywhere miracles were wrought in the name of Christ. A new creative spirit brooded over the abyss of degradation, and lo, a new type of manhood stood erect with face upturned to heaven and seeking after the highest perfection. More than that, the Christian spirit affected the relation of man and woman and created the Christian family. Beyond that, it created that fellowship of faith known as the Christian church. Beyond all this it created the great missionary enterprise, one of the romances of history, one of the finest achievements of the Christian spirit and one of the clearest evidences of the Christian power. No doubt about it, great things have been done in the name of Christ of which history will tell "till the last syllable of recorded time." Like a mighty conqueror the Son of Man has marched down the centuries, lifting up the fallen, saving the lost, striking the shackles from millions of men, rebuking a wrong here, ending an abuse there, lifting the gates of great empires from their hinges and changing the whole drift of history. No one who studies history with impartial mind can minimize these achievements.

But the student of history will be puzzled at some of the things he finds. He sees the Gospel going forth conquering and to conquer. He sees men cherishing great ideals and filled with holy enthusiasm. But ever and again he sees the Christian disciples pausing in their march and beginning to hesitate. There is an arrest of progress, a slackening of effort. Then comes a wavering and sometimes a decline. Men go a long way with Jesus Christ toward the Kingdom; but they fail to go the full

length with him. The Gospel does great things in men and in churches; but it leaves great areas of life unredeemed and unmoralized. Today there are millions of souls who believe in Christ and profess allegiance; there are great churches with their organization, numbers, wealth and influence. And yet here is Christendom with its pains and evils; here are our cities with their abysmal slums, their degradation, their hopeless lives. After these centuries of Christianity, here is Christendom, the heaviest handicap that Christianity has to bear. It might be possible for the nations to believe in Christianity if it were not for Christendom. In a brief and rapid review we may note some of the facts and then search for the causes.

The first century was a time of promise and hope. The early disciples were full of zeal for the Master and right earnestly they set about the work before them. Within a generation of the time that Jesus ascended from Olivet it could be said that the Gospel had been preached in every nation under heaven. For a time it seemed that the disciples would go all the way with Christ and the nations would be won unto the Kingdom of God. But as we pass out of the first century into the second, we find that a change is coming over the life of the churches. The zeal of men wanes, the churches become cold and formal, and the leaders begin to compromise and hesitate. In time the light of the churches grows dim, and in many a city the light went out and the candlestick was removed. In Western Asia and Northern Africa, the lands where the Gospel was first known, Christianity is largely a spent force and the crescent has displaced the cross.

In the course of time the Gospel passed westward to Europe, to Italy and Spain, to France and Germany. Here it entered upon a great career of conquest and seemed about to establish the Kingdom of God. Millions of disciples were won; great churches were built; great theologies were formulated. For a time the Roman Empire disputed the way with the church and sought to exterminate the cause of Christ. Then Rome roused itself by one supreme effort to destroy this new religion. The doors of the Coliseum were shut, and empire and

church struggled in deadly conflict. By and by the doors of the Coliseum were opened, and the church came forth from its baptism of blood and radiant with the crown of victory.

The church had now won a place for itself in the world and had practically become supreme over all life. Its voice dictated the policies of nations; its decree made and unmade kings. The church did great things for men and nations. Within the peaceful shelter of the church the most saintly lives were developed and the most Christly virtues were fostered; many evils in society were attacked and ended; childhood was protected and the condition of women was improved. Humane laws were passed and hospitals and orphanages were built; education was encouraged and much was done to make life sweet and happy.

But alas, there is a pause in the march, an arrest of development, a failure to go all the way with the Gospel. The church did much to win lives to Christ and to ameliorate human conditions; but it did little to redeem life as a whole. In the personal virtues, the Middle Ages, the ages of the church's supremacy, were far in advance of pre-Christian times. Life was purer than in the old world. But in civic virtues, as Lecky has shown, the Middle Ages were distinctly below the best Grecian and Roman life. The church praised education, yet allowed the people to remain in ignorance. It built great cathedrals in whose shadows the most hopeless poverty flourished. It praised charity, but did nothing to find and remove the causes of poverty. Within certain ranges the church was potent; but it allowed great areas of life to remain untouched and unredeemed. It made church saints, but it did not make good citizens. It prepared men for heaven, but it did not build heaven on earth.

Once again, in the Reformation period, a great advance was begun. The Reformation was a great movement from every point of view and marked a new era in human progress. The shoulder of God was behind the rising tide, and we of today feel the ground swell of that mighty movement. The Gospel was rediscovered and restored; the soul was emancipated and man stood upon his feet

in new-found hope. For a time it seemed that the rising tide would sweep everything before it and bring in the Kingdom of God. Thus Macaulay tells us that within fifty years of the time that Luther nailed his theses to the church door at Wittemberg, Romanism could hardly maintain itself on the shores of the Mediterranean. But once again there was a pause, a change, a shifting of emphasis, a failure to go the full length with the Gospel. The reformers forgot the Reformation and began to debate and fight over questions of doctrine. The leaders tried to keep on good terms with kings and princes, and so avoided questions of justice and right. The years pass and, as Macaulay says, fifty years later Protestantism lost its power and could hardly maintain itself on the shores of the Baltic.

The Reformation has done much for the world in many ways. It has broken the chains upon the soul and has taught man to stand upon his feet. It has inspired the democratic movement that has shaken kings from their thrones and has lifted the people into citizenship. It has emphasized individuality and initiative and has created modern literature and science. Yet, with it all, the Reformation has failed to secure the largest and longest results. There is an arrested development, a pausing in mid career, a failure to apply the Gospel to all life and to seek the whole Kingdom of God.

Coming down to our time, we face a situation that is most disturbing. In modern Europe the condition is alarming and seriously discredits Christianity; certainly it fatally discredits the type of Christianity that has prevailed. Europe is the one continent that has received Christianity; here it has been known for eighteen hundred years, and has had time to show what it can do. Yet the churches as a whole have not known what Christianity means; at any rate they have not given Jesus Christ a chance. The nations have grown up under the tutelage of the churches, yet the churches have failed to lead the people in the way of Christ. The churches failed to create in the people calling themselves Christians, a Christian state of mind, which would have made the world war impossible. Again, when peace came, the failure of the

nations was even more tragic. Men forgot the high hopes that were expressed during the war; they set out to crush their enemies and to exact punitive reparations; the most selfish schemes were written into the Peace Treaty; and it is not a Treaty of Peace, but a seed plot of future wars. The condition of Europe at this time signifies the bankruptcy of the type of Christianity that has long prevailed.

In other lands the situation is not much more encouraging. In America the churches have grown strong; and we have some two hundred and thirty thousand churches with some forty-five million members. These represent a large part of the intelligence and wealth, the power and influence of the country. It is far within the truth to say that two-thirds of the more capable and intelligent people of the country believe in Christ and are affiliated with the churches. The time has gone by when Christians can say that they are a feeble folk without numbers or power. There is intelligence enough, conscience enough, religion enough in any community in America to transform it from top to bottom, to purify recreation, to abolish slums, to humanize industry and ensure honest and capable city government.

The condition of things in modern Christendom is well calculated to arouse questioning and fear. Why has Christianity no larger results to show after its long history? Why has the salt not purified and sweetened the community? Was it not possible to prevent the growth of slums in our cities with all the evils that flourish in these moral quagmires? Why do we have so much strife in the industrial world? Why has Christianity not abolished war? Why did it not prevent the world war, which was a war of Christian peoples? Could not Christianity have created a state of mind in the peoples of Europe who professed allegiance to Christ which would have made this world calamity impossible? There is a tragic failure somewhere, and any effort to obscure this fact is useless.

For, be it remembered, these things we have considered are not found in pagan lands. They are found rather in lands that have long known Christianity; they are found among men and peoples that have professed faith in

Christ and have prayed for His Kingdom. The men at strife in industry are mainly Christian men. The churches have determined the ideals of the nations and have controlled the education of the people. The leaders in the nations that began the war and carried it on with such frightfulness were professed followers of Jesus Christ. The men who framed the Treaty of Peace and guided the policies of nations, practically all were sons of the churches.

As we survey the history of the past and study the conditions of the world today, we are puzzled at what we find. Something has gone wrong. There is failure somewhere. Surely no man can say that all this is what Christianity means and this is all that it can do. Surely no one will say that all this is what Jesus Christ expected of men or intended his Gospel to do. In age after age, in many lands, the Gospel has been at work doing great things for God and man and giving promise of the Christianization of the world. And yet in every age and land we find the church pausing in its career and stopping short of the largest success; there is a failure on the part of Christian people to go the whole length with Christ and seek the whole Kingdom of God. There is a failure on the part of the church to keep its place and make its calling and election sure. And in the lands where Christianity has been the longest known, we find that the nations are ruined by deadly wars and civilization faces collapse.

Such are some of the facts as they appear in history. Now what explanation can we offer for such meagre results? There are several possible explanations, and these may be stated.

One explanation says that it is due to the nature of Christianity itself; to the fact that it is a purely personal religion. It is potent enough in the individual life; but it is weak and hesitating in the wider ranges of society. Another closely related explanation says that Christianity is a spiritual religion, that it deals with man's inner and spiritual life, that Christ's mission is to save souls out of the world and prepare them for life in heaven. For this reason it has little concern with this world and has

no call to change social conditions. Still another explanation teaches that in the present the Gospel is to be preached for a witness; that we are not to expect the transformation of society, but the coming of Christ; and so nothing can be done in the way of social change till Christ returns to set up His Kingdom. A fourth explanation says that the failure is due rather to the weakness of men themselves, to their misundertanding of the Master and their unwillingness to apply His teachings in their fullness.

Which explanation shall we accept? Shall we say that Jesus was a mystic and a dreamer, with a message for the individual soul but no message for society and nations? No one who honors the Master and believes in Him as a prophet from God can accept that explanation. Shall we say with many that Christ has come to save souls out of the world but has no call to improve the world and change human society? But He says expressly that He "came not to condemn the world, but *to save the world;*" and He bids His disciples pray that His Kingdom may come on earth as in heaven. Shall we therefore conclude that the failure is due to men themselves, to the fact that they have misunderstood Christ's purpose, have misplaced the emphasis in thought and effort, and have been unwilling to obey him fully? In a word, to the fact that Christianity has never really been tried? Those who believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God will be compelled to accept the latter explanation, however humbling it may be to ourselves.

THE FAILURE OF MEN

In seeking to account for the limited success of the Gospel, we must recognize the fact that the Gospel works in men and through men. Jesus called men into his service to be heralds of the Gospel and builders of the Kingdom; and he must use such means as he can find. The first disciples were men, with all the weaknesses and limitations of men. The Master was not limited in himself, but he was limited by those through whom he worked. As it was in that first century, so it has ever been since. The children of the Kingdom are yet children of men—weak, limited, full of prejudices and prepossessions, loving Christ indeed but never fully Christlike. All, even the best of men, misunderstand the Christ; some deny him at times; many go part of the way with Christ but few go all the way. Men receive the Gospel of the Kingdom and then reduce it to the small dimensions of their own ideas. No doubt about it, the Gospel has had very unpromising material to work upon and to work with. With such poor workmen it is not strange that the Gospel has made such small headway and the Kingdom is yet unbuilt.

Yet this is not the last word by any means; for the Gospel is here to renew and transform men. It is here to fill men with zeal and make dynamic lives. The power that wrought in Christ when it raised him from the dead, is seeking to work in men. And this Christ can do exceedingly abundantly above all that men can ask or think, according to the very power that works in them. There must be some explanation of the failure of men other than the mere failure of their devotion and virtue. The failure of men to follow Christ and seek the whole Kingdom, is the very thing that requires explanation. And as we review the history of Christianity several things become quite plain.

First, *is the failure of men to see and seek the whole Kingdom of God.* The Son of Man gave to the world the great idea of the Kingdom of God and charged his disciples to live for the Kingdom and seek its righteousness. That idea as it went forth from the Master was a great social ideal, the hope of a City of God on earth where men know God as Father and live together as brothers, a righteous social order built upon the will of God filled with his justice.

But from the first men failed to enter into the Master's thought and few rose to the height of his vision. For a time the early disciples cherished the hope of the Kingdom and interpreted all duty in its light. But as we pass from the first century into the second, we find that a change is coming over the minds of men. As the generations pass and men move away from the Master, his ideal falls into the background and other ideals take its place. This process continues, and by the close of the fourth century the substitution is complete. Some thought of the Kingdom of God as a purely personal and inward thing. To seek the Kingdom of God meant to seek the salvation of man's own soul. Very early many came to think of the church as the Kingdom, and substituted this for Christ's great ideal. This conception and misconception have become historic in the Roman Catholic branch of Christendom; though it appears also in the Protestant world. Still others, going to the other extreme, have thought of the Kingdom of God as the Kingdom in heaven. There is no kingdom here; this world is lost and doomed; our true home is elsewhere; so we must strive and hope till we can reach the heavenly Kingdom. Thus from one cause and another the idea of the Kingdom of God has dropped out of the current of Christian thought and men have interpreted Christ's purpose in other terms than the Kingdom. Down to our own day the great mass of the people do not know what we mean by the Kingdom of God; for fifteen hundred years the rank and file of the people thought of the church when they spoke of the Kingdom of God.

The disappearance of the idea of the Kingdom of God has wrought havoc in the lives of men. It changed their

conception of God's purpose in our world and the scope of Christ's redemption. It changed their outlook upon the world and their work in life. It led them to misread the will of God and to think small the hopes of the Gospel. It narrowed their program and misplaced the emphasis in their thought and effort. This initial failure and misconception is the chief cause of all the other misconceptions of the Gospel and the failures of the church. This fundamental error was the parent of nearly all the heresies that have plagued the world for eighteen hundred years. The indifference of men to the words of Christ and their neglect of the Kingdom of God, constitute the standing scandal of the ages. Ritschl is warranted in the saying that "Since the second century nothing has less guided the church in its efforts for moral renewal than the idea of the Kingdom of God in the sense in which Christ and his apostles used the term." Another and a partial idea has been accepted as a substitute for the great divine Gospel which Jesus gave. The world has suffered much from the wrong thinking of bad men; but it has suffered even more from the small thinking of good men.

Second: *Men have misplaced the emphasis in Christian thought and life.* The message of Jesus is so plain that it does not seem possible for any one to mistake it. He began his public ministry with the announcement: The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand; change your ways and believe the Good News" (Mark 1:14). In all his teaching certain truths are unmistakable: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy might. And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. These things do and thou shalt live." In all his teaching he threw supreme emphasis upon the love of God as proved in the love of men, and the love of men because they were children of God. He affirmed that justice, mercy and truth are the weightier matters of the law. He plainly declares that they who do the will of the Father in heaven are his disciples: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of

God, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." And the great apostle declares that "the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. He that in these things serveth Christ, is accepted of God and approved of men" (Rom. 14:17,18). He says again that circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing; but faith, which worketh by love. And John, who had leaned on Jesus' bosom, declares: "He that doeth righteousness is righteous even as he is righteous." "He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God" (I John 3:8; I John 4:7).

But very early, as we know, a change came over the life of the church and the emphasis was completely shifted. Professor Edwin Hatch in his Hibbert Lectures deals with one aspect of this subject and describes some of the influences at work in the first four centuries. He calls attention to the fact that in the Gospels the Sermon on the Mount is placed in the very forefront. That sermon embodies the teaching of Christ and has to do with life and conduct. We pass to the fourth century and find that the Sermon on the Mount has fallen into the background and the Nicene Creed stands in the very forefront. This is a metaphysical statement with no spiritual power or ethical demands. Dr. Hatch says that the significant thing here is not how did the Christian societies come to believe one proposition rather than the other; but how did they come into the frame of mind which attached first importance to the Creed but neglected the Sermon on the Mount? This substitution, as he also showed, "checked the progress of the Kingdom; Christianity has won no great victories since its basis was changed."

This shifting of emphasis is seen all through the centuries and the results are most marked; first in the lives of Christians and the life of the churches. Almost from the beginning men lost sight of the plain requirements of Christ and placed their main emphasis elsewhere. They gave much of their time and energy to discussion of non-essentials and lost sight of the central truths of the Gospel. They made much of the mint and anise and

cummin of the law and too often omitted the weightier matters of justice, love and brotherhood. Thus it came about, as Professor Hatch shows, that Christian discipleship came to mean the acceptance of doctrines and conformity to church regulations; it no longer meant faithful obedience to Christ and the possession of His spirit; it no longer expressed itself as a passion for righteousness and a life of service. The consequence was that the churches lacked moral passion and were too well content with low standards of morality; they have not insisted upon holiness and righteousness, justice and service on the part of their members; many of their people have not seen that the Christian profession was itself a summons to righteous living. The churches have not made men realize that they who name the name of Christ are to depart from all iniquity and are called to live His kind of life.

The other result is, that the churches have misplaced the emphasis in their policies and have quarrelled over the lesser matters of the law. For long centuries the main attention of church bodies has been given to church orders and succession, forms of ordinances and methods of church government; and they have made these things the foundation of their churches and the test of church fellowship. Nine-tenths of the things that divide the churches have to do with the external and non-essential elements of Christianity. Nine-tenths of the divisions of Christendom would never have occurred if men had been concerned with essential truths. To this day the things that divide the churches are not the weightier matters of justice, love and mercy; they are rather the incidental questions of apostolic succession, modes of church government and statements of metaphysics. The things that Jesus died to destroy,—forms, postures, external profession, modes of ordination,—have been exalted by the church and have been made the tests of church membership. The things that Jesus died to establish,—justice, love, mercy, unity,—the churches have often forgotten and sometimes ignored. Thus the Gospel which began as a spirit, hardened into an institution. And institutional religion, as Dean Inge shows,

does not represent the Gospel of Christ. It is contrary to the genius of Christianity; and it substitutes an external form for a living spirit.

Two illustrations of this misplaced emphasis of the churches may be noted: though innumerable instances might be cited. About the middle of the fifteenth century Constantinople was besieged by the Turks under Mohammed II. and the garrison was in sore straits. In those critical hours the priests of the Greek church were called to leave their cloistered dwellings and monasteries and by their presence at the walls to revive the wavering faith and courage of the people. Their reply was that they could not break in on the habitual order of their devotions and the appointed time for counting their beads, and so must be excused. Constantinople fell and has been under the domination of the Turks from that day.

After the World War the nations were rent and torn with jealousies; the spirit of nationality, we are told, raged like a pestilence in Europe: each nation seemed determined to consider only its own interests and to ignore those of all the rest. Millions of hearts were sore and millions of children were neglected. That was an hour when the world needed a healing word of brotherhood and peace. That was an opportunity for the churches to witness for brotherhood and to affirm the principles of justice and unity. Had the churches known the time of their visitation they might have led the nations into peace and inspired them to build a more righteous world. But what were the churches doing? There were brave men in all churches who saw the opportunity and tried to bring the churches to meet it. Yet in many great religious bodies we find that men were debating and dividing over questions of creeds and metaphysics. So the churches once more failed the world in a crisis. So the work of world reconstruction went by default so far as the churches were concerned.

Third; because men lost the idea of the Kingdom of God and misplaced the emphasis in life, *there has been a sad misdirection and waste of Christian effort.* It is far within the truth to say that as a result of this, only

a fraction of the real power of Christianity has been available in the work of human redemption.

The Gospel as it came from Jesus Christ was a great, vital, divine, human thing, a flaming passion for righteousness, a burning enthusiasm for humanity. The early disciples believed in the Kingdom of God and lived for the day when the Kingdom was to fill the earth. But in the course of time the hope of the Kingdom of God fell into the background, the early hope of a kingdom on earth faded and men turned their eyes toward the far-off heavens. Religion became self-centred and self-regarding. The one passion of man was the saving of his own soul and its preparation for life in heaven. By the close of the fourth century the ascetic ideal was firmly established in the church and was the accepted standard for the Christian life. As a result, the Christian religion came to be regarded as something apart from the world of men and things; religion became the special interest of an ecclesiastical institution; goodness was measured by one's detachedness from the world and its concerns; Christians were called to serve the world as they passed through it on their way to the Celesial City; but they had no vocation to transform and save it; to grow in grace and to prepare oneself for heaven, one must insulate oneself from the world and reduce the points of contact to the lowest minimum.

This conception of the Christian life has had a marked influence upon men and has called forth some splendid efforts of the human soul. All through the Middle Ages there was a succession of saints whose devotion shames us today. Earnest and devout men and women by the tens of thousands withdrew from the world to spend their days and nights in prayer and fasting, in meditation and vigils. In their efforts to grow in grace and attain spiritual power many souls broke all of the ties of life and retired to the lonely cell to spend the years of life in religious devotion and spiritual exercises. Others, as St. Simeon, climbed a pillar sixty feet high, living on its narrow top for many years in summer and winter and bowing themselves to their feet twelve hundred times a day. "What good to God or man came of it all?" asks

Brierley. "How weary heaven must be, if earth is not, of this everlasting repetition." It is true that in the manuals of devotion of these saints a large place was given to charity and service; once every day there came to many of them some round of duty,—feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, sometimes kissing the beggar's sores and giving one's coat to clothe the naked. But we must not overlook the fact that much of this service was given not alone to help the needy, but to add to one's store of spiritual credit. There was no study of the causes of human ills and no effort to change social conditions.

There was something beautiful in all this devotion, as every one must admit. But, after all, what has come of it so far as the world is concerned? Never was there a finer zeal and devotion than was shown in this ascetic life; but never was there a more futile thing than all this asceticism. Three-fourths of all this devotion was simply wasted effort that neither pleased God nor helped the world. Suppose that half the devotion and effort that have gone into spiritual exercises had gone into the work of teaching the ignorant, dealing with the causes of poverty, improving social conditions and building better cities? In that case no nation in Europe after eighteen centuries would be compelled to report ninety-five per cent of its people illiterate; and the world itself might be at least a thousand years nearer the Golden Age. Suppose that men had sought the whole Kingdom of God and had applied the truth of Christ to all life? In that case they would not have overworked the soil, neglected its cultivation and destroyed its fertility; in that case also they would have given more attention to the morality and health of the people and would not have allowed them to remain ignorant. The words of Ruskin with reference to St. Francis of Asissi illustrate the principle we are considering: "If, instead of quitting his father's trade that he might nurse lepers, he had made his father's trade holy and pure and honorable, more than beggary; perhaps at this day the Black Friars might yet have an unruined house by Thames shore, and the children of his native village not be standing in the porches

of the temple built over his tomb, to ask alms of the infidel."

Fourth, another reason is writ large on the face of history: *men refused to apply the Gospel because they could not stand the justice of the Kingdom and were not willing to pay the price of obedience.* This was so in Christ's day and it has been so ever since. The men around the Master were enthusiastic so long as He talked of God and peace. They were willing to take Him by force and make Him a king when He gave them bread from heaven. But when He spoke of repentance and restitution, of justice between man and man, brotherhood toward all, they drew back and turned away from Him. "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden." How beautiful, how sweet, men said. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." Now He has spoiled it all, men said, and we do not know what He means. Men refused Christ and asked for Barabbas because they could not stand the brotherhood and justice of the Kingdom. This is the story that is told with such painful iteration through all the years of history.

This gives us the clue to the Reformation period and its partial failure. We know today that there was a great Reformation before Luther; a great movement among the people that was based upon the Scriptures and inspired by the idea of the Kingdom of God. At first Luther sided with the people and confessed that their course was just. Encouraged by his words the people lifted up their heads and began to hope that the hour of their deliverance was at hand. They took the Gospel seriously and demanded that injustice be ended and righteousness be done. Then some men became alarmed —the men of privilege who were wronging the people, the nobility who denied them justice. Lines were being drawn, the people were making new demands and a struggle seemed imminent. At this time Luther, great and brave soul that he was, grew timid and drew back. He did not want to desert the people but he wanted the support of the nobility. History tells us how he made the fatal choice, how he sided with the secular princes and turned on the peasants. "We must do something

to strike terror into the hearts of the common people." From that hour he fell out of touch with the people, lost his moral passion and gave his attention to doctrinal matters. And so the Reformation was switched from the main track; it ceased to be a great passion for the Kingdom and its righteousness; it became a doctrinal movement and stopped short of its full work. Once more Christ was taken from the people and shut up within the church. Religion was limited to the individual and was not applied in its fullness. The Gospel became a church affair and ceased to be the power of God unto social redemption.

As it has been in the past, so it is today. Men are willing enough to accept Christ's words, but they are not willing to go the whole length in his will. They are willing enough to believe in Him as Saviour and teacher, and are ready to fight for His doctrines; but they are not willing to accept Him as King and give Him authority over all life. They are willing to follow the teachings of Christ with reference to feeding the hungry and clothing the naked; they are ready to endow hospitals, and build rescue missions; but they are not willing to do justly and establish justice in society. They object the moment we begin to search for causes and demand righteous conditions. Men are willing enough to follow Christ so long as He talks of love and grace and does not interfere with their practices and profits. But they are not willing to seek his righteousness or to bring all life under the dominion of His spirit.

Fifth; One of the most subtle reasons of all for the failure of the church, *has been the desire of the church to win the friendship of the world.* The Master warned His disciples that their cause would be unpopular. He warned them also against the folly of trying to keep on good terms with the world. "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you. That is evidence that you have become unfaithful to me." For three hundred years Christianity was ignored by the learned and despised by the strong. Everywhere Christians were spoken against and they were counted as the offscouring of the world.

And these were the centuries of the Gospel's power and progress.

But there came a time when the fortunes of the church were changed. The powers of earth found it expedient to patronize the church and to profess the Gospel. The so-called conversion of Constantine may have affected the outward fortunes of the church; but judged by the results, it was a most doubtful boon. The Roman officials, the powers of earth, the men of privilege and place, took the church under their protection and sought to use it to their advantage. And the leaders of the church began to look to the secular powers for protection and favor.

What followed? There is a double process which is marked through all history. The powers of the world sought to use the church, to bend it to their purposes, to emphasize those parts of the Gospel that are harmless, disapprove those parts of the Gospel that stir up the people and demand justice; they made it hazardous and unprofitable to preach those parts of the Gospel that disturb the present order. This was so all through the past and it has been the fact down to our own day. The leaders of the church came under the influence of the world and acquiesced in the world's ways. They became anxious to win and hold the favor of the rich and great. So they trimmed their sails to the breezes and took the safe course. All through the Middle Ages there runs the same monotonous and doleful tale. The clergy, admitted to the privileges of the rich, forgot the Gospel of justice and brotherhood and preached servience and contentment. They allowed the sheep of the Father's flock to be torn by the wolves, and were silent or merely whispered objections when the people were oppressed.

As it has been in the past so it is down to our own day. The state churches of Europe have been silent while the most atrocious wrongs have been done and the most outrageous wars have been started. Brierley says that since Seabury no English bishop has jeopardized his coach and four by a righteous but unpopular protest. The churches have wanted to keep on good terms with the great. They have needed money for their vast mis-

sionary and philanthropic enterprises. So they have played safe and have not "meddled with outside matters." For a hundred years in England and Europe the people have struggled for life and freedom; and through all that time the churches have largely been indifferent when they have not been hostile to the disturbers of the peace. The consequence is that great sections of the Scriptures have been largely overlooked; and great areas of life have been left unredeemed.

There is a deeper reason for this attitude. The churches, many of them, by their constitution, stand for order and dignity, for the ancient faith and the established custom, for things as they are, for peace and quiet. It is not strange, therefore, that they should be afraid of the new wine. It is natural enough for them to want to confine it within the old skins. Again and again in the past the church has faced an open door and a great opportunity. There was a timing of God's providences in the interests of His Kingdom. The spirit had wrought in men and had awakened new aspirations in many hearts. Men were in expectation and were ready for a great advance. But again and again we see the churches hesitating and halting. Some men, the holders of privilege, were opposed to change; so they tried to keep things as they were. Other men were afraid of the new and strange; they feared confusion and disorder; and so they sided against the innovators. "The Kingdom of God is like leaven." "Think not," said the Son of Man, "that I am come to bring peace on earth, but a sword." Let us not miss the great truth here. If justice is to be done, if society is to advance, if the Kingdom of God is to be established, some privileges will have to be revoked, some changes will have to be made in society. The churches in the past failed to meet the crisis in part because of spiritual inertia, in part because of moral timidity, in large part because they did not want to offend the men of privilege, and in large part because they feared change more than they feared the wrongs which made change necessary.

Finally. *All of these things have cooperated in giving men a partial Gospel and a limited outlook upon life.*

It came about, from one cause and another, that men failed to measure the breadth of Christ's redemptive work and so did not apply the Gospel to all life. They interpreted Christ's purpose in its personal meaning and its ecclesiastical bearing; but they signally failed to interpret that purpose in terms of human relation and social institutions. Men have taught that the church is a divine institution, at once a realm of the King's reign and an agency in the Kingdom's advance. But it has hardly entered into their thought to conceive that the family, the state, and industry, are also fields for the display of Christ's redemptive purpose and means of the Kingdom's progress. And so little effort has been made to interpret the redemption of Christ in human, social, industrial and international relations. Little effort has been made to interpret the great principles of Christianity, justice, brotherhood, love and service in all realms of life. Little effort has been made to build a social order on these principles. Men have not tried to interpret and apply the teachings of Christ in the social order and industrial relations; and we do not know what the great words of Christ means in these realms. Nay, many men have flatly denied that the Gospel has anything to do with factories and mills, with industrial corporations and halls of legislation. Not alone the man of the street, but the professor of economics, has warned us to keep distinct the provinces of ethics and of economics. The consequence is men have not seen that life in church and family, in nation and industry, must be organized on a Christian basis; and they have not known what to do or where to begin in order to Christianize business and industry.

Beyond this men have never tried to interpret Christ's purpose in terms of humanity and to apply his teachings across international boundaries. In a general way men have believed in the brotherhood of humanity and have admitted that each nation has its place in the Father's purpose. But like the Jew of old, men have construed the divine purpose in terms of our national life and have assumed that other people must somehow look to us for their place. Each people has had its tribal God; and

other peoples may share in this God as they acknowledge our superiority. Only in a very meagre and fumbling way have we interpreted and applied the principles of ethics and the teachings of Christ across international boundaries. Recently I had occasion to consult half a dozen great books of theology on the question of industrial relations and international ethics. And I found that these subjects were not even recognized in most of them. Men have not seen that Christ is the redeemer of all life; they have not tried to bring all life under the dominion of Christ's spirit; they have not tried to seek the Kingdom of God through all the institutions of society; they have not tried to build their cities after the pattern of the City of God.

As a result of these misconceptions men have failed to seek the whole Kingdom of God and have allowed great areas of life to remain unredeemed and unmoralized. In their devotion to what they call the spiritual interests of life, they have been indifferent to the struggle for justice and effort for social betterment. Some of these men opposed Clarkson and Howard, and called all such efforts "unspiritual and unholy." The Earl of Shaftsbury faced this same opposition in his effort to help women and children, and is compelled to write: "Sinners are with me; saints are against me. Strange contradiction of human nature." Some of these same people today make light of Social Service and regard it as unholy and mistaken. Others have given the teachings of Christ a purely personal bearing and have not attempted to understand their wider social bearing. And so they have never tried to apply them to life as a whole. Nay, many men have frankly said that Christ's teachings are impracticable and unworkable in the social world and the industrial order. Others have given his teachings a future application. Thus we are gravely told that the Sermon on the Mount is Christ's law for the Kingdom. As the Kingdom of God has not come, the Sermon on the Mount does not now apply and is not yet the law for society. Thus do men make void the word of Christ by their own actions. And all this in face of His plain warning: "Why

call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

This failure to see and to seek the whole Kingdom of God and to claim all life for the Kingdom, has really lost the Kingdom itself. Christianity must be all or it is nothing. A partial Christianity is not the Christianity of Christ. The only way that Christianity can itself be saved, is by saving everything. Long ago the Master declared that "No man can serve two masters. For either he will love the one and hate the other, or he will hold to the one and despise the other." On this question the verdict of history is positive and unequivocal. Men tried to be Christians in a part of their lives; but left many relations unredeemed. They served God in one area of life but allowed great regions to remain unmoralized. The result is just what the Master foresaw and foretold. The corruption and decay in the unredeemed areas of life reacted and destroyed personal religion and church life. Life is a unity, and it tends to become all good or all bad. Lincoln uttered a profound truth when he said that the nation cannot endure half slave and half free. Society cannot exist half Christian and half pagan. Ruskin tells us that the people of Venice were the most religious people during the Middle Ages. They were so religious, in fact, that they kept their religion for their homes and churches. They said it was altogether too sacred a thing to have anything to do with politics and business. "The consequence was," says Ruskin, that "their politics and business became utterly corrupt, and the corruption here reacted upon their churches and homes and destroyed any religion that might be there." All through the past men have tried to save a portion of life while leaving society pagan. The result is that life has always tended to one level, and the paganism in society has reacted upon the church and has destroyed its religion. Men have not tried to Christianize life as a whole, and so they have really failed to Christianize it at all.

We realize fully that great things have been done in the name of Christ. We recognize also that some noble and notable attempts have been made to interpret the

Christian ideal and realize a Christian social order. Thus Savonarola in old Florence had a vision of a Christian city and bravely sought to make Jesus Christ King of the city. The Ana-Baptists in Ceneral Europe caught a vision of the Kingdom of God, and both preached the Gospel of the common man and tried to realize a Christian order. John Calvin, in Geneva, believed in the redemption of all life and tried to build a Christian city. Knox and his colleagues in Scotland, saw in vision a redeemed people living in covenant relations with the Invisible King, and sought to bring all life under the divine law, "from the King's throne that should be established in righteousness, to the merchant's balance that should be used in faithfulness." The Puritans and Pilgrims in Massachusetts colonies, the Baptists in Providence Plantations, and the Quakers in 'The Holy Experiment" in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, sought to realize the Kingdom ideal among men. Let us give all honor to whom honor is due.

But at best these were but partial interpretations of Christianity and limited application of Christian principles. They were the visions of a few prophetic souls rather than the settled purpose of the people. And so it may be said that no generation and people has entered into the length and breadth of the Kingdom of God. Only in a very halting and fumbling way men have spelled out a part of the Gospels meaning and tried to realize the great purpose of Christ.

One word of explanation or caution may be spoken. In speaking of the causes which have been at work obscuring the Gospel and defeating the purpose of Christ, no attempt has been made to connect these with any particular church or any special school. It would be quite easy to show that the spirit of ecclesiasticism, the spirit that exalts itself and seeks to dominate men, is found in the Roman Catholic Church. But as a matter of fact, some of that spirit is found in all bodies. It would be easy also to show that certain other causes have been conspicious in the state churches of England and Germany. But unfortunately those same influences have appeared in other church organizations.

Some things are made very plain in this review. First, Christianity has been tried in part and in certain realms and relations; but it has never been tried in full and in all relations. It is true that the Christian spirit has done much in the world and has wrought mighty changes. But "the contributions made by Christianity to the working efficiency and the constructive social abilities of humanity in the past, have been mainly indirect." Its social effectiveness was mainly a by-product. In a real sense, therefore, it may be said that no generation of men ever tried in a large way to understand the great ideal of Christ and build the social and political life on a Christian basis. In some of his teachings men have never taken Jesus seriously. To this day there are large sections of his message that are not emphasized and applied; as, for example, his words concerning stewardship, wealth, forgiveness, justice, philanthropy and cross-bearing. Generations have called Christ Lord, Lord, but they have not done the things He said. Civilization has honored Christ with its lips; but its heart has never been given to His service.

The second fact is also plain; men have tried some things that passed for Christianity, but they have never tried Christianity itself. They have tried ecclesiasticism and doctrinalism; they have tried their own wisdom and their own ideas, but they have never fully tried the very truth and life of Christ himself. They have never brought the whole grace of Christ to bear upon the whole need of man. And so only a fraction of the real Kingdom of God has been realized on earth. The result is that men do not really know what the Gospel means or what Christ can do.

So the third thing is true; Christians have never given the Gospel a chance to show what it can do. "The real Gospel, if it were accepted," said Dean Inge, "would pull up the roots, not only of militarism, but its analogue in civil life, the desire to exploit other people for private gain. But it is not accepted." We may admit further with the Dean, that "it is not Christianity which has been judged and condemned at the bar of civilization, it is civilization which has destroyed itself because it has honored Christ with its lips while its heart has been far

from Him." But this does not touch the real question at issue. The real Gospel, we may admit, has not been accepted by non-Christian people; but the tragedy of the story is found in this: that the real Gospel has not been accepted by the people who call themselves Christians. But even more tragic than this is the fact that men have deceived themselves with reference to the real Gospel. Generations of church people have called Christ Lord, and have supposed that in doing so they were doing the things that He said. Many of the churches of the past believed that they represented the will of Christ and taught men His full Gospel. But we now see that they acquiesced in politics that were frankly pagan; they accepted a civilization which honored Christ with its lips while the heart was far from Him. That is, great branches of the church, many millions of men, have lived on the mere fringes of the Kingdom and have supposed that they accepted the real Gospel, when, as a matter of fact, they did not obey Christ's words and their heart was far from Him. Ah, if the Master were here today, might he not ask with a ten-fold sorrow: "Have I been so long time with you and yet have ye not known Me?"

This suggests the lesson for our times and shows the task before us. It is not the failure of Christianity that is responsible for the tragic conditions of the past and the present. It is rather the failure of men to understand the Christianity of Christ; it is their unbelief in the real Gospel, their unwillingness to go all the way with Jesus Christ; it is due to the substitution of forms for realities and the acceptance of half truths for the whole Gospel. And this brings us to the subject of the next chapter.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE HOUR

The world changes and men change with it. The world changes and ever new questions come to the front and make their insistent demand. In every age the Gospel, so far as it has been followed, has proved itself to the power of God and the wisdom of God, in that it has answered men's need and met every question as it arose. Today we are brought face to face with some urgent questions, and these are here to challenge our faith and prove the Gospel's power. In our time the Gospel has its fortune to make or to lose in the wider fields of man's social, industrial and international life. In the significant words of Sir Edward Grey: "The condition of the world is an ultimatum to Christianity."

First, here is *the challenge of the social question.* In our time we have found that humanity, through the toils and sacrifices of other generations, has come into a great heritage of achievement. But, owing either to neglect on the part of many or to greed on the part of a few, the control of that heritage in large part has fallen into a few hands, and these not always the wisest and most deserving. The consequence is, as Benjamin Kidd says, the great mass of people are born into the world to find that the best places are already preempted and held in perpetuity; and so they find themselves without any real opportunity in the world and a fair equity in the national heritage.

I shall not attempt to mention the various plans that have been devised first and last to solve this problem and change the situation. But I come right to the heart of the question and ask: why not try Christianity? Why not go back to the fundamental Bible teaching and say that the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. This earth he has given to the children of men to be their heritage and their home. Why not accept the Bible

teaching that all souls are God's, and so one soul has as much right to be as another. Why not say with the teachers of Scripture, that while men may have possession of the earth, one man has no right to gain a monopoly of the earth and deny his brother man a right to opportunity? Why not accept and teach the great principle of the Jubilee law, which Jesus announced in the Nazareth synagogue he came to fulfil in the acceptable year of the Lord? Why not teach the primary Christian truth, that man is a steward in all he is and in all he does; and so nothing that he handles is really his own; that he is hence under obligation to use his talents and his property in such a way as to advance the Kingdom of God and promote the cause of justice? This is not socialism, for the reason that it is a thousand miles deeper, more radical, more fundamental than any socialistic program. All this is no new demand; but it is the old truth which has been sun-clear from the beginning.

Second, we have *the challenge of the industrial situation.* There are many persons who miss the real meaning of the industrial issue and see only the surface symptoms. On the surface it seems to be a question of hours and wages, control of industry and the distribution of its products. But this is only the outward and visible sign of a deep and human trouble. We have strife in the industrial world because there is injustice in society, because human relations are broken and dishonored, because there is a frightful discrepancy between the Christian ideal and the social order.

The industrial system of today is the product and result of forces and principles with which Christianity has nothing to do. Nay, worse, these forces are in direct opposition to the principles of Christ. It has been taught that selfishness is the basis of economic activity; that each party is expected to get all he can for himself and give as little as necessary to the others; that men are "free to do one another to the death provided only the arena be a market and the instrument bargain;" that competition is the law of trade and it is useless to complain of men because they are self-seeking. So long as such principles are accepted, that long we will have strife

and confusion. So long as the industrial order rests upon such assumptions the goodly fellowship of the apostles could not operate our present system and make its workings just or satisfactory.

The first thing is for us to deny and repudiate these pagan principles of our economic order, and to affirm and substitute Christian principles. "Competition is put forth as the law of life. That is a lie," says Maurice, "and the time has come for us in word and deed to repudiate it." The next thing is to affirm that men are brothers before they are employers and employes: we must bring them together as men and adjust the relations between them in terms of justice and love and brotherhood. This was Jesus' method and Jesus' remedy. The Master when importuned to take sides in a dispute concerning property, disavowed the function of a judge and divider in such matters. But in the next words he shows very clearly that he is concerned with the spirit which lies behind disputes and causes division. So he charged men to beware of covetousness and to cultivate a spirit of brotherliness. The real causes of industrial strife are an unbrotherly spirit and a greed of gain. The effective remedy is found in a substitution of the spirit of brotherhood and justice for the spirit of greed and pride. We admit that there must be some radical changes in the order and method of society, that this spirit may be created and may have full sway. But these changes in society will come about as fast and as far as the spirit of brotherliness and the passion for justice prevails. The various plans proposed to bring industrial peace, such as profit sharing, compulsory arbitration, industrial democracy, may or may not be the final word; they may or they may not work out the results desired.

Thus, beyond any changes in the machinery of the industrial system, there must be changes in the attitude of men themselves. We can never solve the industrial question by any half-way measures. Nine-tenths of our efforts miss the mark for the reason that they ignore underlying causes. We can never bring peace to the industrial world by any meddling with wages, hours of labor, recognition of the unions and system of profit

sharing. This is merely lopping off a few branches and leaving the root untouched. The church must strike at the heart of the problem and lay the axe at the root of the tree. The church must take away the love of gold and bring men under the sway of a new motive. There must be the substitution of the spirit of service for the spirit of greed; there must be a willingness on the part of all to regard others as brothers and to be brotherly toward them; there must be a sacrificial attitude of mind which will lead men to look not primarily on the things of self, but to seek the good of all. We must go down and down beneath all mere questions of hours and wages, dividends and bosship, and bring men together face to face as men; and we must then adjust the relations of men in terms of justice, love and brotherhood. We must learn to apply the Gospel across class lines, to deal with one another as brothers and partners. The world has tried strikes, lockouts, boycotts, legislation; and the result is confusion and strife. Why not try Christianity, with its brotherhood, its justice, its co-operation? The finest evidence of the Gospel today is a company of men, employers and workingmen, sitting together as brothers to consider the affairs of the enterprise and to work together as partners. And all this ought to be self-evident to those who confess faith in Christ.

Third, here is *the challenge of the great World War.* The World War is one of the greatest calamities that has ever befallen the human race. It is impossible for any man to appreciate the magnitude of this calamity or to measure its tragedies. Fully eight million men have been killed or have died of wounds; another eight million have been injured in various ways and are crippled for life. This is sad enough; but this is only the beginning of the tragedy. The war has cost the nations billions of dollars, and little children generations hence will be born under the shadow of this war debt; billions of money that ought to have gone for education and health and human well-being must be spent to pay the interest on this colossal debt. But even more tragic than this is the fact that millions of homes have been broken up and millions of children must begin life without a father's care and coun-

sel. Many millions of children are being cheated out of an adequate education and a fair chance in the world. But quite as dark as all this is the fact that national enmities have been intensified, and for generations men of one race will suspect and hate the men of other races.

This great war raises some very serious questions. Could not Christianity have prevented this war? The real causes of this war are not far to seek or hard to find. They are the greed of nations, their ambition to extend their boundaries, to gain new markets, to control the strategic points of the world's trade. For generations the nations of Europe have been sowing the wind, and it is not strange that they should reap the whirlwind.

The foreign policies of the so-called Christian nations have been practically untouched by the Christian spirit. Those policies might have belonged indifferently to Mohammedan, Buddhist or pagan peoples. "Diplomacy," says Professor Gilbert Murray in defending the foreign policy of Sir Edward Grey, "in the past twenty years was an outlaw's market." Little or no attempt has been made to teach the brotherhood of mankind or to interpret the Sermon on the Mount across international boundaries. Not only so, but the underlying principles of our civilization have been purely Gentile and pagan. The nations have been looking each on the things of self and no one on the things of others. Each has been trying to secure the largest share of the earth, to control the world's trade routes and to checkmate its competitors; each has sought after the things that make for national advantage and have not taken thought for the things that make for world peace. The stronger nations have regarded backward peoples as legitimate objects of exploitation. They have sought to control smaller nations in the interest of trade and finance. Thus far the only way that the smaller nations could be safe at all, was to come under the sovereignty of some stronger nation. The nations have believed in the God of heaven, but they have not believed in the one Father of all. Each nation has had a tribal religion, a national God. In a partial way they have believed in justice and brotherhood, but they have never believed in these principles

in the relation of nation with nation. These policies and practices foredoom the world to be a scene of confusion and warfare. So long as self-interest determines the policies of the nations, that long nations will fight when their interests collide.

Then why not try Christianity as the remedy for war? The world has tried diplomacy and it has failed. The world has tried battleships and armies and they have failed. Why not try Christianity? Why not believe in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Mankind? Why not say that God hath made of one blood all nations of men; that he has given each nation its heritage and its right to be, and so it has the right to its own territory and life. Why not say that injustice and land grabbing on the part of a nation is even more cruel and wicked than injustice and stealing on the part of an individual? Why not declare that the nations calling themselves Christian must give up their ambitions of trade control and economic imperialism, and bring international trade under the control of morality and law? Why not insist that nations equally with individuals are under obligation to practice the Golden Rule and do unto others as they would have others do unto them? Why not affirm that nations are here not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to serve the cause of humanity? Why should not the churches know of the political treasons that are plotted and the imperialistic ambitions that are driving men into war? And why should they not testify against these things in the name of the Lord, disfellowship the men who do these things and say that they are the enemies of the Kingdom of God? The church must testify against this evil spirit, this greed of nations, and then call men and nations to repentance. The churches must make men and nations know that when they covet and steal the territory of weaker peoples they are sinners and pagans. The churches must refuse to sanction and bless these unholy wars of greed and conquest; they must make the nations know that they fight as pagans and not as Christians; they must honor the spirit of Christ and must keep his name out of these unholy quarrels. The churches must insist that they who name the name of

Christ shall have done with iniquity; they must refuse to absolve and bless the nations that follow the policies of Cain; they must testify that the way of justice, love and brotherhood is the way of security, life and peace.

The world today is in a desperate condition. It is like the sick woman of the Gospels who had tried many things of many physicians, but was nothing bettered but rather grew worse. The world has tried ecclesiasticism, and all history records its failure to save men or to unite the people. The world has tried science for its many ills; and science has no power to save men; nay, we have seen science turned against man and devising means for destroying men. The world has tried education; and while education has done much, it has left the heart untouched and the moral will untrained; it has no power to charm away the selfishness of men and send them to seek the Kingdom of God and its righteousness. The nations have tried diplomacy, and all the world knows the result. The diplomats of the world have played with the lives of men and the destiny of nations as though they were pawns on a chess board. Diplomacy failed to avert the most disastrous war of ages; and diplomacy failed at the Peace Conferenc to give a just treaty or to ensure world peace. If man's extremity is God's opportunity, there is just one thing for the world to do: come to Jesus Christ and try the Gospel. The most important task before our generation is to think out the meaning of Christ's life and teaching in relation to social, industrial and international affairs; and then to set about the work of applying his principles all along the line of life.

This question really has two aspects, both of which are essential and must be taken together. Why not try CHRISTIANITY? Not a part of it, not a substitute for it, but Christianity itself in its length and breadth, its reality and power? And why not TRY Christianity to the full; that is, find out what Christianity means and then apply it to every detail of life and every relation of society; bring its spirit and motive to bear upon every question and go just as far as Christ goes?

THE POWER OF CHRISTIANITY

In all this discussion some questions have been haunting our minds and striving for expression. What is Christianity, the Christianity of Christ? Then why not take Jesus Christ seriously and do the things that he says?

The first thing is for men to find out what Christianity is and what it clearly means. Who is Jesus Christ? What has he come to do? What does God want done in our world? What is meant by the Kingdom of God? What are the Kingdom ends that we are to seek in the church and in the family, in the state and the industrial order? These are the primary questions of life, and on these the churches should have a definite mind. The indifference of the churches to these questions and the uncertain answers that are given are nothing less than the reproach of the church's intelligence.

What then is Christianity? It is implied in what we have said above. It is that great system of light and truth and power revealed to us in the life and work and truth of the Son of Man. In its scope it is the idea of a Kingdom of God on earth; a human society redeemed in all its parts and organized according to the will of God. In its inner principle it rests upon the Fatherhood of God as revealed in Christ, and the Brotherhood of Mankind as realized in a life of service. In its dynamic power it means the spirit of love and brotherhood, of equality and service in all relations of life. In its method it is the permeation of all life by the spirit of Christ and the transformation of life into the glory of the Kingdom. It demands that men organize life in all of its relations in terms of justice, love, service and brotherhood. Christianity is an earth religion. It is here to touch every cradle with its glory, to transform every life by its power, to transfigure every institution of society into the order

of the Kingdom. As the sunlight which fills the heavens and brightens the earth seeks to get itself reborn into the rose bush and the wheat field, so the life of that Kingdom which is over all seeks to get itself incarnated in human life, interpreted in human relations, and fulfilled in human institutions. In the Christian conception of things the spirit is primary and all these things are subordinate. The weightier matters of the Gospel according to Jesus are justice, love, and truth. In face of these things, ritual, forms, modes of church government are but secondary things, the mere dust of the balances. It is evident that many things that have passed for Christianity are only a part and fragment of it. It is evident also that much of the time men have been dealing with the incidental things of the Gospel and have overlooked its central and essential meaning. The time for half truths is over. Nothing but the whole of Christ's Gospel can meet the whole need of the world. We cannot work with power unless we work with God. We cannot expect the world to believe in the Kingdom until we seek it ourselves.

The second thing is for men who call themselves Christians to realize what their profession means and then to lift the standard of their lives. According to Jesus, they who would be his disciples must deny themselves, take up their cross and follow him. They are charged to seek first the Kingdom and its righteousness; they are charged to be perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect; they are to live by far different standards from the world; their lives are to be marked by a passion for justice, by their obedence to Christ, their service of others. Jesus expected the least and lowliest member of his Kingdom to be better than the best and bravest person outside that Kingdom. According to the earliest teachers, the Christian disciples were called unto holiness of life (2 Cor. 7:1); their life and deportment were to be different from that of the men around them; they who confessed Christ as Lord were thereby committed to his kind of life; in the emotion of their hearts, in their conversation and conduct, their dealings with men, they were to be like their Master; in their whole range of life they were to live by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

There is a challenge here both to the individual and to the church. It is for each person who bears the name of Christ to take himself in hand and bring his own life to the test. Then it is for the churches to make men know what it means to be Christians and to guide men in the right way. The churches must make men know that they are to obey Christ in all things; they are to possess his spirit and walk in his way; they are to cherish no enmities, but are to seek reconciliation with all men; they are to be meek and self-sacrificing, and are to live for others' good; they are to desire the riches that are within and are to give up the service of mammon; they are to regard life as a service, and are to seek not their own profit, but the advantage of the many. Does anyone doubt what will be the result? It may be that some half-hearted followers will turn back and walk no more with the churches. But it is far better for men to know where they stand now, than to live all their life under a delusion.

The third thing is for the church to take itself in hand and see how far the failure is in it. The most vain and useless policy is for the churches to resent this inquiry, and so refuse to search themselves through and through. The only wise and saving course is for the churches to humble themselves and return to the Lord Jesus.

"Judgment must begin at the house of God," says Phillip Gibbs. "The most vain thing is for the churches to protest their innocence and claim that they have fully represented Christ. As a matter of fact the churches of Europe have not been faithful to Christ and have not shepherded the people. They proclaimed the name of Christ to men, but they did not instruct men in his way. They taught men to repeat his name, but never tried to create a Christian state of mind in the people. Men have tried to be Christians in their personal lives and in their church circles. But they have not so much as heard that there is such a thing as the mind of Christ for social life, for industrial relations, for international affairs. So the churches of Europe failed in the crisis; so men followed the call back of the beast in the jungle rather than the voice of the crucified one whom they pretended to adore." There is one thing for the churches in all lands to do:

humble themselves before God and search themselves through and through with his truth. So long as they refuse to face the truth and realize their failure, there will be no real repentance and no hope. The churches of Europe and the world can never lead the nations into the Kingdom till they themselves repent, return unto Christ and prove themselves worthy of the place of leadership. "The church," so wrote one of the senior English chaplains from the front, "has specialized in irrelevancies." The time has come for the church to specialize in the Gospel and to seek the whole Kingdom of God.

The world will return to the church when the church returns to Christ. The faith of the people will revive when the church regains faith in God. Everywhere men are saying that if the Christianity of the churches is the only Christianity, then it is hardly worth while for us to consider it longer. The world wants a real faith; it is anxious to have a god in whom it can believe, but it demands something more Christian and more potent than the ecclesiasticism of the past. If the churches really have no knowledge of God and cannot show men what to do in this time, they should frankly confess failure and get out of the way. But if they have the very truth of God, they must make that truth known and must give mankind a true leadership. The time for trifling, make-believe half truths is past. The world waits to see whether the churches take Christianity seriously. This is a significant report from Bishop Tucker, of Kioto. He tells how the Japanese government sent a special commission to the U. S. to study the influence of Christianity upon the lives of the American people. They reported on their return that while "education, commerce, and industry have been developed to a wonderful degree, there is little evidence that the Christian religion is regarded as important by most people." The churches of Europe have made it hard for men to believe in Christianity.

The fourth thing is to gain a new faith in Christ and the power of the Gospel. On all sides there is a subtle unbelief in the power of the Gospel and the practicability of its teachings. Everywhere we find men professing

faith in Christ, trusting their souls to him for eternity and yet saying that his teachings will not work between nations and are not practicable in modern industry. Millions of men who call Christ Lord, in the church, yet do not believe that his teachings will work in industry and politics. "The Golden Rule is good enough in religion, but it will not work in history. The law of humility and self-sacrifice, the principle of reconciliation and fellowship, are good enough in the church; but they are out of place in social and commercial life." Not all men confess their faith or lack of faith in such frank words; but millions of men show that this is their view; and other millions cannot be made to see what humility, self-sacrifice, reconciliation, and fellowship mean and demand in industrial and political relations.

There are many kinds of unbelief in our time, but this is the most subtle and dangerous. There are a few men who ridicule the Scriptures and deny that God has ever spoken to us in His Son. There are others who affirm the inspiration of the Scriptures and believe that Jesus Christ is God manifested in the flesh, but they say that his teachings do not apply in the wider ranges of life and are not practicable in the social and industrial world. The first kind of unbelief is trifling and harmless beside this second variety, for this denies the very power and workability of the Gospel; this betrays Christ in the house of His friends; this is the unpardonable sin, in that it denies the very value of the Gospel. To confess one thing in the church and then go outside and deliberately live the contrary, is to mock at God and laugh in the face of the Cross.

Jesus Christ is all or He is nothing. A Sunday God is no God at all. A God who directs the working of the church, but has nothing to do with the social order, is hardly worth mentioning. A Christ who serves as doorkeeper of heaven, but has no authority on earth, is but a pale and impotent ghost. We are growing ashamed of a religion which shelters itself under the great name of Christ and is content to accept his promise of salvation in the future while it turns a deaf ear to the cry of the world and refuses to apply His Gospel in all the relations

of life. "The church cannot go on preaching Jesus to individuals and Machiavelli to states," says one; "at last the high gods weary of such stupidity and send the deluge." Once and for all we must get rid of "That variety of atheism which would deny the relevance of God's will to certain phases of life." The question at issue in society, in states, among the nations, at bottom is this: shall we have one law for the person and the church and a different law for society and industry? This is the central question, and as we face or evade this question shall we honor Christ and help the world. To believe in Christ is to accept Christ's law and stand or fall with it. It is certain that nothing but a crucificed church can ever win the world to a crucified Christ.

"But," men say. No, there is no But about it. The man who names the name of Christ is committed to the Christian way of life. To him the word of Christ is the final law and the end of all controversy. Is it vain and Utopian to ask that Christians shall simply try to be Christians? As long as men expect nothing of themselves they will be content with low standards. As long as they pick and choose among the words of Christ they will have large areas of life unredeemed. In all this we are not preaching any new Gospel or laying any impossible demands. We are simply trying to state some of the primary things of Christ and to remind men of the truth which they have known from the beginning. What the world needs today is a generation of men who take Jesus seriously and are willing to go the whole way with him. What it needs is a company of men who believe that the mind of Christ is wise economic doctrine and good political wisdom, and will then confess their faith in their lives. Some, of course, try to turn the edge of this appeal by saying that the teachings of Christ are personal and do not apply to social matters. Many will say that these demands are Utopian and we must not expect too much of human nature. There is one only and sufficient answer; it is found in the old questions: "Into what then were ye baptized if not into a new life in Christ? Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

The one condition which is the summary and application of all others is this: *We must regain the idea of the Kingdom of God and establish it in its central place in thought and effort.* Till this is done we shall not fully know what Christianity means or what we are called to do. When this is done all other things will follow.

The chief cause of the church's failure in the past came through the loss of the Kingdom of God and the substitution of other and lesser ideas. The church lost the idea of the Kingdom and as a result it has had a partial Gospel. The church substituted itself for the Kingdom and then got entangled in a false conception of things. Men thought of the church as the Kingdom and so narrowed the purpose of Christ in the world. They thought of the church as the Kingdom and so were never able to see the Kingdom meaning of the other relations and institutions of life. They narrowed Christ's redemptive purpose to one institution of life and practically disinherited three-fourths of man's being. If the church is the Kingdom, then three-fourths of life must forever lie beyond the frontiers of the Kingdom. The church is a highly specialized institution. It can never be so widened as to include all the relations and institutions of society. So long as the church regards itself as the Kingdom men will fail to see the Kingdom meaning of all institutions and will regard service in these institutions as religiously negligible. As a matter of fact the Kingdom is intended to include all life; and men are to seek the Kingdom in and through all the relations and institutions of society. These are all fields for the display of the Kingdom's life and means of the Kingdom to advance. Not until we recognize the idea of the Kingdom of God and reestablish it in its central place in thought, shall we understand the real meaning of Christianity or have the whole of Christ's Gospel. It is certain that men cannot lose the great central Christian idea without losing the key to life. It is equally certain that their efforts will be hap-hazard until they move in line with God's great purpose in our world. Let the churches return to Christ and regain the idea of the Kingdom of God. Let them make that idea central in their thought and life. Let them observe

the great landmarks of the Kingdom,—righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,—and live to make these dominant in society. Let them seek the whole Kingdom of God in and through all the relations and institutions of life. In a word, let them believe the whole Gospel and give it an opportunity to reveal its power in the world.

THE FINAL TEST

The final question has to do with the actual trial of Christianity itself as the divine method of world redemption. What does it mean to try Christianity? What would happen in the church and in the world if men should try it? Will they have the courage of their faith and actually do the thing they approve?

What does it mean to try Christianity? Let us admit that this is not as simple a matter as some people suppose. If Christianity were primarily a matter of church membership or of doctrinal conformity, it might not be so difficult. If Christianity were a matter of rules and formulas that could be applied without any thought on our part, the process might be more easy. But Christianity is a spirit; an ideal rather than a rule or formula. It contains great principles which men must interpret and apply for themselves. It does not pretend to give men a ready-made answer for every question. It is rather a life that must be lived out according to the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Further, it would be a simple matter so far as the attempt is concerned, if Christianity were a purely formal and external matter. It would be easy to pass resolutions affirming this or that policy. It would be comparatively easy to pass laws decreeing the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. It might be possible if we had an army at our back, to drive men into the river and compel them to be baptized, as did Clovis and Vladimir. But these ways have proved ineffective in the past; and they are impossible today even if they were desirable.

Our study thus far has shown us some of the mistakes of the past and has suggested a truer method. It has charted some of the false ways and blind alleys, and these need not be travelled today. In a negative sense, trying Christianity means very much more than calling Christ

Lord, being a member of a church, keeping up one's church fees, and accepting a body of doctrine. Millions of people who call themselves Christians think that Christ is the head of their order, that religion is the sum of the church's observance. Many other millions think that it is primarily a matter of belief, the assent to certain doctrines, the conduct of life according to certain rules.

In a positive way trying Christianity means something more vital, more potent, than this. It means for a first thing that one come to Christ and accept him as Saviour, Teacher and Master, and set out to live his kind of life. It means that men make it their first concern to understand his teaching and know what he asks of them. It means that they seek the riches that are within, that they accept the cross as the law of their lives, that they bring all things to the test of Christ's spirit. It means further, that men accept Christ's ideal of the Kingdom and learn to make that Kingdom first in their plans and efforts. It means that men place the main emphasis upon the weightier matters of the Gospel,—justice, love, brotherhood and service,—and that they actually do things that Jesus has commanded.

Then in its broader reaches it means that men accept the great principles of Christianity and set about the work of organizing life in all of its relations on the basis of those principles. It means that we make the ideal of Christ our supreme standard and that we bring every purpose of our lives and every process in society to the test of that standard. It means that we set out to organize industry in its ideals, its motives, its processes, its results, upon the basis of brotherhood and cooperation. It means that men actually accept the law of love and brotherhood, of service and self-sacrifice, of forgiveness and meekness, for every relation and interest of life. It means that they cultivate a Christian state of mind; that they think of others as brothers; that they forgive enemies; that they take an attitude of confidence and good will toward men of other groups and other nations; that they set about the work of organizing all life in accord with the Kingdom and will of God. It means that

men accept the sovereignty of Christ over all life and seek to make his spirit regnant in society. It means that men stand with Christ against all injustice and wrong, and that they join with Christ in his passion for justice and brotherhood. It means that we accept the Cross as the law of society; that we make service and cooperation the objective and method of industry; that we make justice and brotherhood the policy of nations. In fine, it means that men actually try Christianity; not a part of it, not a substitute for it, not for their personal lives and churches only, but for every relation and interest of life.

Let us understand the appeal and challenge in all this We do not complain because men of the world have not tried Christianity; our appeal is to those who profess faith in his name and are zealous for his honor. Perhaps we have no reason to expect that men of the world will honor Christ's law and seek His Kingdom. At any rate they are not likely to do so till Christians show them what this means and whether it is worth while. But we have a right to ask those who bear Christ's name to accept his ideal, to find out what their faith means and to follow wherever Christ leads. Let us understand also the challenge that is upon us. We do not ask Christian men to do impossible things. We realize fully that evil cannot be expelled from society by a show of hands, and the world cannot be transformed by an act of legislature. But we have a right to expect that the light will shine out, that the salt will actually sweeten society, that the yeast will leaven the lump of life. We do expect men to find out what Christianity means, to apply Christ's teachings to every interest of society, to set about the task of making society Christian. We have a right to expect that they who pray: Our Father who are in heaven, will begin to think of all men as brothers and will seek to organize life on the basis of justice, love and brotherhood. Surely Christ has a right to ask that Christians shall be Christian.

What would happen in the church and in the world if men should really try Christianity? Two results would certainly follow.

It is certain that men would gain a new conception of the Living God and would have some new evidences of the divinity and power of the Gospel. *Is Christianity a memory or a power?* Is it primarily the record of an incarnation, a set of doctrines, a tradition well learned, a faith in past deeds of a now silent God? Or is it the witness of life, a living power, a vital and vitalizing experience, a cooperation with an ever-living God? Let me say frankly, that if there is a God who has been asleep or on a journey, saying nothing or doing nothing for eighteen hundred years, I have no interest in him and he does not appeal to me. But the God in whom Christians believe is the ever-living God. He was alive yesterday and he is alive today. He was at work yesterday and he is at work today. But where are the evidences of his power? What are his people doing to reveal his presence? Let us note this, that if men are to have a twentieth century faith they must have a twentieth century God. First century evidence was sufficient for first century faith. *We must have some twentieth century evidence if we are to have a twentieth century faith.* Because we believe that Christianity is the truth of God, we are confident that Christianity, if fully tried, would show at once its divine origin and its redemptive power. Professor King in his able book "The Development of Religion," shows how men come to believe in God through their experience of his presence or their realization of his power. "That which does not affect for good or ill lies, of course, outside of the pale of value-judgment, and is for him non-existent." (Page 270.) Belief in God is the conviction which has arisen in the experience of some individual person or people. "The only way to prove any claim of theology is to show its vital relation to the crises of life. No one was ever convinced of the truths of religion in any other way." (Ibid, p. 350.) If faith in God is weak in many men today it is due in large part to the fact that men do not permit God to function in their lives in any vital way. Faith in God will revive in the world as men try Christianity and give God opportunity to reveal his power.

It is certain also that if men set out to try Christianity

some changes would soon appear in the world. Suppose those who call themselves Christian should set out to have the mind of Christ and begin to practice his words? Half the problem of society would simply drop out of sight. Civic conditions would improve a hundred fold; industrial strife would cease; half the racial jealousies of Europe and America would disappear. The leaders among employers and among workers, most of them, are Christian men. But in their dealings with one another they have forgotten this fact. They have stood upon their rights. Each group has considered the issues involved from its own point of view. Suppose both sides approached the issues in a spirit of good will and altruism? Suppose each should look at the question from the other party's point of view and be willing to go the second mile? One-half of the industrial strife would cease at once. If Christian people would take Christ seriously and would begin to apply his teachings, the world would rise at once to a higher level and men would believe that God has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world.

The world today wants some new evidences of Christianity. We talk much of self-sacrifice and glory in the Cross of Christ; but what the world waits to see, is men and women who will actually accept the Cross and bear it for Christ's sake. Let the world see the powerful and the privileged abjuring their power and surrendering their privileges that they may restore to the people their rights and may no longer receive unearned incomes. Let it see those who possess power and can command luxury, choosing poverty so long as their brothers are in want. Let it see captains of industry surrendering their privileges and setting out to organize industry on a cooperative and democratic and Christian basis. Then the world will begin to believe that God has spoken to the world in his Son. Not only so; but the world wants to see the great evils of the world cured and prevented. Much is being done in the name of Christ to lift up the fallen, to cheer the faint, to provide orphanages and hospitals and to feed the hungry at home and in other lands. All this is good and we do not mean to make light of it. But

thus far very little has been done to abolish social evils and deal with the causes of waste and war. Thus far little has been done to organize industry on a Christian basis and ensure industrial brotherhood. It is well to run a rescue mission; but first abolish the social evil. It is beautiful to provide a tuberculosis hospital for the people of the slums; but first abolish the slum itself and make the city sanitary. It is very beautiful to run a Red Cross; but today the demand is that we stop the diabolism of war. "The only test of the Christian religion which the modern world will regard as adequate, is its applicability to the solution of the social question."

It is just here that we find the real heart of our task. Men have not been willing to accept the will of Christ and make the Kingdom supreme. They have been willing to call Christ Lord and do some of the things he has commanded. But they have not been willing to give him the key of life and to go the whole length with him. To do this would disarrange their plans; it would rebuke their policies; it would cancel many of their privileges; it would make an end of monopoly; it would destroy their race prejudices and compel men to treat one another as equals; it would compel them to be just and brotherly in all of their ways. No doubt about it, if Christianity should be tried it would make some radical changes in society. If the Golden Rule were applied, nations would have to cease their land stealing and restore the lost liberties of weaker peoples. Is Wall Street any more prepared to follow Jesus than was the Sanhedrim of old? Would Paris or Berlin, London or Washington give Him a kindlier welcome than did Nazareth or Jerusalem?

But, men say, we must be reasonable and moderate. The Gospel, if it were applied, would cause confusion and upset things. At a great meeting in one of our cities recently the speaker declared that if Jesus were here He would feel out of place in our modern complex society, and the great audience cheered this sentiment. We must do the best we can, men say; we must apply the Gospel little by little and wait for a more convenient season; God is not in a hurry and we must not be rash. There is just one word that can be said on this subject: if

Christianity is the power of God and the wisdom of God, there is an end of all controversy. We must follow Christ rather than take the way of the world. If modern society would be upset if the Gospel were applied, then modern society that far is wrong. But note this: It is not Christianity but the lack of Christianity that has ruined the world and caused our woes. It is the selfishness and greed of men, their love of power, their murders and wars, that have plagued mankind and blasted the earth. It is the spirit of confidence and good will, the policy of sacrifice and service, that has preserved society from total disruption. It is not Christianity that would upset things; it is the lack of Christianity that may yet wreck our world. The Gospel, if it were fully applied, would work some radical changes in society; but the Gospel so applied would heal society and save the nations.

There is just one significant and glorious word that may be recorded: Christianity works; it works whenever and wherever it is tried. It works even with our poor and weak faith. It works even with our half-hearted obedience. It is the power of God unto salvation wherever it finds a receptive soul. In fact it is the only thing in the world that really works. Force cannot change men and make them love goodness. Legislation can do much to clear away obstacles; but at best its scope is limited. Education and science can do much to inform the mind and ameliorate man's lot. But the Kingdom of God is a Kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Christianity, the Christianity of Christ, works wonders wherever it is accepted and as far as it is tried. What would it do if men threw their lives open to God and were willing to go the whole length with Jesus Christ? "What might not Christianity do," Leigh Hunt and Shelley agreed, "if it relied upon love and not upon dogma?" What might happen if the church would accept the whole Gospel and make a great adventure for God? And Christianity is the only thing that really works and performs miracles.

There are unwasted potencies in the Gospel; there are infinite resources in Christ,—if only men would release

those potencies and give Christ's power full opportunity. The time has come, as a suggestive English writer says, to make the experiment of applied Christianity on a scale as large as the world. And he further says that the most important thing for us to do is to *recover the sense that Christianity is an Adventure, an Enterprise, a Crusade.* The Gospel is not a passive, static, crystallized thing; it is dynamic, explosive, revolutionary. In a word, the supreme task before the church is the simple task of knowing the Gospel and applying it to the whole of life.

In view of this the course of the Christian discipleship is clear. It is to reconceive the meaning and purpose of Christianity and accept Christ's view of things. It is to reconceive its mission, to unite its forces; and then in the name of Jesus as King, to arise and grapple with the great evils of our time, as poverty, disease, crime, misery, injustice, monopoly, war; to destroy these evils of darkness and build up a world of justice, brotherhood, health, virtue, freedom, opportunity, joy. We are not here to accept the world as it is; it is not our business to accept injustice and poverty as inevitable and necessary. It is our business to believe in a better, cleaner, more just, more Christian order, and then go forth into the world to challenge injustice, destroy the works of the devil, abolish the hells of this world and put out their fires by the tears of our love; make straight paths for men's feet, and build our intelligence, our conscience, our faith and love into the whole social order and international world. It is not our business to ask whether Christianity is practicable. It is not for us to wonder what would happen if we followed Christ. Does all this sound strange, impracticable, Utopian? The only strange thing about it is that it should sound strange at all. We may not be able to blue print Utopia; but a map that has no Utopia upon it is not worth a second glance.

It is Christ or chaos. After all our failure and search we turn to the Son of Man with a new confidence. One thing has become clear as we have proceeded; Jesus Christ is the only hope of our world. The most significant and challenging fact lies here; that men of all faiths and

of no faith, admit this. He holds the key to the unsolved problems of our humanity. There is none other name under heaven known unto men that can bring salvation and help. The world has tried other physicians and is nothing bettered but rather has grown worse. And now at last, distracted and despairing, it turns to Christ for light and guidance. This lays upon the churches a heavy responsibility and summons them to a mighty task. The churches that bear Christ's name and profess faith in His Gospel must give Jesus Christ to men and apply His Gospel to the whole need of the world. They must first of all exemplify the truth in order that they may teach the truth. They will then be able to present Christ as a living and potent Saviour. Jesus Christ is the divine answer to the world's cry. In Jesus Christ, in His life and teaching, His sacrifice on the cross, His exaltation to the throne of authority, we have a sufficient salvation and the final Gospel. There is no other way than Christ's way into the Kingdom.

When half gods go then God arrives. The half gods of the world are dead beyond hope of resurrection. The religious of ecclesiasticism, of words and formulas, are gone, and let us hope are gone forever. The religions of half life, of emotion and ceremonies, of selfish individualism and limited range are gone beyond recovery. The man who supposes that the world will any longer be satisfied with empty forms and tribal gods, is woefully deceived. Let all such cheap little religions go. Give us a religion of reality and power. The so-called redeemers of men have been tried, and all have failed to meet the need and heal the world. There never has been such a crisis upon the world. There never has been such an opportunity before the church. The plea that Christianity has never been tried may explain the failures of the past; but it cannot any longer be accepted as a plea for weakness in the future. Why has Christianity not been tried? Will men try it today? Says an earnest and passionate writer: "Men will not give religion two thousand years or twenty centuries more to try itself and waste human life. Its time is up; its probation is ended; its

own record ends it. Mankind has not eons and eternities to spare for trying out discredited systems."

Then why not *try* Christianity? This is the superlative duty upon all who profess and call themselves Christians. We must find out who Jesus Christ is and what he wants done in this world; we must then make the venture of faith and go the whole length with him. If his teachings will not work, let us know it and no longer delude ourselves. But if they are the very wisdom of God; if they will work in the world and are the very power of God unto salvation, then let us joyfully confess him as our Lord and go withersoever he leads. Do we really believe in Jesus Christ? Dare we be Christians? Do we believe that the meek shall inherit the earth and that love never faileth? Dare we forsake all other masters and measures and go as far as Jesus Christ goes? This is the acid test, the supreme challenge of our time. As we meet it shall we meet the test and honor Christ.

All this requires faith, more faith than many possess. It requires courage, and courage of the highest kind. It demands faith in God, faith that this is a righteous universe, faith in the right of righteousness to be triumphant, faith that there are infinite resources in the Gospel of Christ, faith in the redeeming power of his Cross. We who call ourselves Christians are not the broken fragments of a forlorn hope; we are not following a Christ who has grown old and feeble; we are not poor dreamers expecting a kingdom which never shall come. We know whom we have believed; and we believe that the Kingdom shall be his. We admit that the redemption of the world is a great undertaking and requires a long time for its full realization. But it is one thing to see the divine end and realize that time may elapse before the process is complete; and it is a different thing to say that nothing can be done, to confess that the idea of love and brotherhood will not work and accept the evils of the world as inevitable and give up the struggle for a better world. If men would only believe the Good News of the Kingdom and would give the truth a chance, their very belief would make the better order easy and would show the Kingdom at our very door.

And so, it all comes to this; that our supreme call is to cultivate the believing attitude and thus make the better world possible. The Kingdom of God is at hand; change your mind about the Gospel and its power; believe the Good News and make the Kingdom a reality. Today the cause of Christ, like Lazarus, is standing at the door of the tomb bound about by the graveclothes of the past. And once more the voice of authority is heard: "Loose him and let him go."

If the church could only catch the vision of the Kingdom and could see the King in his beauty. If it would only hear the Master's challenge and rise up to follow Him. If it would lift the standard of the Cross and summon to a great adventure for God. What would happen? All around us are men with tremendous possibilities of vision and devotion who are ready to do and dare anything for a great cause. The church would, of course, have to face the cold and deadening indifference of those who are at ease in Zion, the sluggards and time servers. It would have to endure the open scorn and secret opposition of men of privilege and power in church and society who find the present system profitable and do not want to be disturbed in their plans. But the men of vision and devotion would come flocking to the standard. The whole world would feel the thrill of a new life. Great evils would vanish out of our society. Injustice would hide its head and creep away to die. This generation might mark a great advance toward the Kingdom of God. Once more might be heard the voice of the children in the streets singing as they go:

"Hosanna to the Son of David.
Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord;
Hosanna in the highest."

THE FELLOWSHIP FOR A CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ORDER*

I

This Fellowship binds together for mutual counsel, inspiration, and co-operation, men and women who are seeking to effect fundamental changes in the spirit and structures of the present social order through loyalty to Jesus' way of life.

II

We believe that the deepest human fellowship has its necessary basis in fellowship with God as He is revealed in Jesus.

III

We believe that according to the life and teaching of Jesus, the supreme task of mankind is the creation of a social order, the Kingdom of God on earth, wherein the maximum opportunity shall be afforded for the development and enrichment of every human personality; in which the supreme motive shall be love; wherein men shall co-operate in service for the common good and brotherhood shall be a reality in all of the daily relationships of life.

IV

We must, therefore, endeavor to transform such unchristian attitudes and practices as now hinder fellowship: extravagant luxury for some, while many live in poverty and want; excessive concentration of power and privilege as a result of vast wealth in the hands of a few; monopoly of natural resources for private gain; autocratic control of industry by any group; production for individual profit and power rather than for social use and service; arrogance and antagonism of classes, nations and races; war, the final denial of brotherhood.

V

We believe that in the spirit and principles of Jesus is found the way of overcoming these evils, and that within the Christian Church there should be a unity of purpose and endeavor for the achieving of a Christian social order. By means of fellowship in thought and prayer we come to understand the point of view of those who differ from us, make possible new discoveries of truth, and aid one another in the solution of common problems. We believe that social changes should be effected through educational and spiritual processes, especially by an open-minded examination of existing evils and suggested solutions, full discussion and varied experimentation. We pledge ourselves to vigorous activity in seeking by these means a solution of the social problems which we face.

VI

The Fellowship functions through personal contact, correspondence, group meetings and periodic conferences—local, sectional and national. Plans for action resulting from these conferences will, so far as possible, be carried out through existing organizations, or in some manner independent of the Fellowship, since its office is not administrative or legislative. The Fellowship does not plan to conduct classes, open forums, conferences or kindred activities for non-members, nor to pass resolutions of any sort or go on record as endorsing or disapproving any special program or practice.

VII

In our desire to avoid over-organization, the structure of the Fellowship has been made as simple as possible. There is a National Committee of 50 members, an Executive Committee of 20 members, an Executive Secretary, and a Convener of each local group. The members of each group shall meet together from time to time without formal organization. The minimum of necessary expense is met by voluntary gifts.

VIII

Men and women who agree with the principles outlined herein, and who desire to co-operate with those of like mind and purpose, are invited to become members of the Fellowship for a Christian Social Order.

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*Information concerning this movement may be secured from Kirby Page, 311 Division ave., Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey.

LIGHT ON SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS

1. CHRISTIANITY AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, a Discussion-Group Text Book, prepared for the Federal Council of Churches. Kirby Page, Editor. Facts, Principles, Programs. An invaluable reference book. 120 pages, cloth 50 cents.

2. FACING THE CRISIS, by Sherwood Eddy. The Fondren Lectures of 1922. An outgrowth of 25 years of study, observation and addresses before students in all parts of the United States, Europe, the Near East and the Orient. A challenging discussion of the vital problems of the hour—philosophical, religious, social and industrial. 241 pages, cloth-lined paper 50 cents, cloth $1.50.

3. THE CHURCH AND INDUSTRIAL RECONSTRUCTION, by the Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook. A notable book, with chapters on the Christian Ideal for Society. Unchristian Aspects of the Present Industrial Order. Present Practicable Steps Toward a More Christian Industrial Order, Etc. 296 pages, paper $1.00, cloth $2.00.

4. THE ACQUISITIVE SOCIETY, by R. H. Tawney, Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. A vigorous discussion of rights and functions, industry as a profession, property and creative work, the condition of efficiency, etc. 188 pages, cloth $1.50.

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CHRISTIANITY AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

A DISCUSSION GROUP TEXT-BOOK

Prepared by

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LESLIE BLANCHARD
SHERWOOD EDDY
HARRISON S. ELLIOTT
F. ERNEST JOHNSON
DAVID R. PORTER
OLIVE VAN HORN
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For the Educational Committee, Commission on the Church and Social Service of the

FEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AMERICA

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1—A DIVIDED WORLD.

In what quarters is the present economic order being challenged? Where are the points of friction? What are the consequences of a divided world?

CHAPTER 2—POVERTY—MISFORTUNE OR BLESSING?

What are the advantages of being poor? What are the disadvantages? What does Jesus teach concerning poverty?

CHAPTER 3—IS POVERTY A SERIOUS PROBLEM?

Are the wages of the lowest paid workers sufficient to maintain a family in health and decency? What proportion of workers are receiving low wages? Is the national income sufficient to provide plenty for all?

CHAPTER 4—DO GREAT FORTUNES HELP OR HINDER SOCIAL PROGRESS?

What are the chief sources of riches in the United States? In what ways are great fortunes a social asset? What are the dangers of great fortunes?

CHAPTER 5—ARE LUXURIES ANTAGONISTIC TO PUBLIC WELFARE?

How much does a family need?
Is there enough to go around?
What are the effects of luxury?

CHAPTER 6—DOES MODERN INDUSTRY HELP OR HINDER THE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN BEINGS?

What are the benefits of modern industry? What are the human costs of modern industry?

CHAPTER 7—WHY IS THERE NOT ENOUGH TO GO AROUND?

Why is present production inadequate?
Who is chiefly responsible, manager or workers?

CHAPTER 8—HOW CAN INDUSTRY BE MADE TO PRODUCE MORE GOODS AND BETTER PEOPLE?

Is production for private profit a more impelling motive than production for social use? What steps are being taken to stabilize industry? How can more cordial human relations in industry be promoted?

CHAPTER 9—WHAT CHANGES IN CONTROL WOULD MOST BENEFIT INDUSTRY?

What are the merits of control by owners and stockholders? By employes' representation? By the workers? By the consumers?

CHAPTER 10—WHAT DEGREE OF PUBLIC CONTROL OF INDUSTRY WILL BEST PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE?

What kinds of public control of industry are now being exercised in the United States? Is public control increasing or decreasing? What further extensions of public control are desirable?

CHAPTER 11—HOW RAPIDLY CAN A CHRISTIAN ECONOMIC ORDER BE ACHIEVED?

Is a Christian economic order practicable? What are the Churches doing in the realm of industry? What is the evidence for and against speedy progress in the achievement of a Christian economic order?

120 pages, cloth, 50 cents. Association Press, 347 Madison Ave., New York.

CHRISTIANITY AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Facts, Principles, Programs

A DISCUSSION GROUP TEXT-BOOK

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK, First Presbyterian Church, New York City.

Allow me to express my very warm commendation of this fine piece of work. It seems to me thoroughly and carefully done, and in handling the difficult problems with which it deals, I think a very unusual balance of judgment has been sustained. It seems to me to be one of the very best mediums we have in our possession now to introduce an inquiring mind into the Christian attitude toward social and economic problems.

BISHOP CHARLES D. WILLIAMS, Protestant Episcopal Church, Detroit, Michigan.

I have read with great interest and profit the advance sheets of Christianity and Economic Problems. It is an excellent piece of work. I hope it may be widely used in conference groups and in study classes in our churches. Christians everywhere today need especially not only an awakened conscience but an informed understanding on the application of the gospel to our economic problems, particularly in this day of supreme crisis. This work has evidently been done with great care and evinces not only a thorough grasp of the question but a fine balance and fairness of judgment.

BISHOP FRANCIS J. MCCONNELL, Methodist Episcopal Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.

After reading the whole work carefully, I wish to express my great satisfaction with its thoroughness, fairness and suggestiveness. It is quickening and stimulating as well as informing. The treatment is both in line with Christianity and Economics. That is to say the bearing of the book is such that the human values are kept in clear view while there is the most thorough recognition of industrial and social facts as such. The temper is at once humanitarian and scientific. I wish that all ministers could be familiar with this work.

ALVA W. TAYLOR, Social Service Secretary of the Disciples.

Up-to-date, meaty, authoritative. Nothing better has been written for class and group discussion. It hews to the line, is not biased, unflinchingly faces the human problems involved in modern industry. Gives fundamental facts on such social problems as poverty, great fortunes and social progress, luxuries, modern industry and human development, national income and the cost of living, changes in control that would improve conditions, and discusses how a more Christian order can be achieved.

RICHARD ROBERTS, American Presbyterian Church, Montreal.

This book seems to me to be altogether admirable. Its method and matter could only with very great difficulty be improved upon; and its courage and thoroughness are worthy of its great purpose. I hope it will have wide and serious study.

Arthur E. Holt, Congregational Social Service Secretary.

Dr. Holt regards this book so highly that he sent out a special letter to 5,000 Congregational ministers in which he said: "You are wondering what book you can use for discussion groups this fall. Will you allow me to suggest one which I wish could be put in the hands of every pastor? It bears the title "Christianity and Economic Problems." The chapter headings are as follows:"

Lynn Harold Hough, Central Methodist Episcopal Church, Detroit.

I have read all of it. It interests me very much, and I hope that it will have the widest possible circulation and very general use as a basis for class work. Whatever a man's opinions, this volume will bring him into contact with facts which he ought to know and passages which he ought to understand.

James M. Mullan, Social Service Secretary of the Reformed Church.

I am heartily in agreement with the approach made to the problems under discussion. It is clearly evident that the book is what it claims to be: a study course and not propaganda. I am much impressed with the amount of information the book contains and the carefulness of statement indicated throughout. The questions for discussion are searching and will lead to further investigation on the part of those who study the course and provoke earnest thought.

Cleland B. McAfee, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago.

During the summer I received a copy of Christianity and Economic Problems. I write to say that I have used it in my writing of the Sunday School Lessons of 1923 to what I hope will prove to be great advantage, and that I have been impressed in all my reading of the little book with its balance and fair presentation of the complicated problems of today. I trust that it may be widely used in discussion groups.

Federal Council Book Review Service

Under this title appears the second of the "Social Problem Discussion Series" prepared by the Federal Council's Educational Committee and published by the Association Press. It is intended for discussion groups in church and Christian associations. The text analyzes the social problems presented by the unequal distribution of wealth, privilege and power, by the extent of luxurious living and by the dominance of the profit motive and of autocratic rule in industry. These questions are approached in a non-technical way, from the point of view of Christian principles and without dogmatic adherence to any particular proposed remedy. The course, like the first of the series—"What Is The Christian View of Work and Wealth?"—is aimed at securing intelligent discussion of the problems presented, not at advancing any particular solution. The same kind of discussion has been employed in making it that the committee hopes to provoke through its use.

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